



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Occupational Therapy (OT) Arthritis Care Program in Hong Kong East Cluster (HKEC) General Outpatients Clinics (GOPC): A Pilot Study

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Introduction

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common condition for restricted daily activity and can significantly impact on quality of life in Hong Kong (Woo, 2004). Worldwide estimates suggest that 9.6% of men and 18.0% of women aged 60 years have symptomatic OA of the hips or knees (Murray, 1996). Occupational therapist provides arthritis care program to patients with OA by means of empowerment, assessment, and intervention, leading them to the active life-style. This study reviews the profile and the effectiveness of this program.

Objectives

To assess the effectiveness of an OT arthritis care program for patients being referred from GOPCs.

Methodology

Retrospectively review patients with OA, referred by GOPC in HKEC from 1 January to 31 December 2013. A convenient sample were recruited (n=134). Severe cognitive impairment were excluded OT provided preventive care program to OA patients by empowering them in self-managing of their own diseases, engaging them in developing proper biomechanical alignment in performing daily activities through posture and position, activity strategies, joint protection techniques, shoe wear and insole advice and modification. Demographic data, pain visual analog scale (VAS), Health Assessment Questionnaire (HAQ) were measured at the first and last sessions to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The respective values on first and final sessions were compared using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test

Result

Overall, 134 subjects were recruited into the study, 95 female and 39 male; 95% have OA Knee and 5% OA ankle. 45% of the subjects suffered pain bilaterally. Their mean age was 67.3 years. The mode of years to diagnose of OA was 1-5 years. Results showed that the mean right knee pain VAS was significantly reduced from 2.91 to 1.01

(n=101, Z=-7.126, p=0.0001), while left knee pain VAS was reduced from 3.08 to 0.83 (n=92, Z=-6.985, p=0.0001). The mean HAQ was also significantly reduced from 7.49 to 3.54 (n=134, Z=-9.338, p=0.0001) 104 subjects reported overall improvement $\geq 50\%$. Conclusions: The OT preventive arthritis care program in GOPCs was effective in improving pain and function in patients with OA. OA in primary care have significant benefit from OT preventive programs in GOPCs, it is suggested to further promote in primary care settings.